



DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

SDG ADVOCATE TRAINING

STORIES OF ACTION 2017-2019



INTRODUCTION

The mission of Development Perspectives is to contribute to lessening poverty, inequality and climate change through transformative education and active global citizenship. The #SDGchallenge is a development education project which aims to grow a national network of community leaders and adult and community education (ACE) practitioners who are aware of and knowledgeable about the SDGs and who are taking action to contribute to their successful implementation in Ireland. The SDG advocate training is a key part of ensuring this goal is achieved.

The SDG Advocate Training is an 8 month Development Education project for people in the non-formal adult and community sector. The project is designed to allow participants to deepen their understanding of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, represent the project internationally and lead transformative change in Ireland.

A vital element of the 8 month training is to mobilise participants to implement an action project in their own community and by doing so, raise awareness of the SDGs.

This document is a compilation of action projects which have been implemented by past participants. We have also included innovative ideas for which advocates have passion and energy but have not been fully implemented to date. The advocate journey is a process so this document will reflect future action projects as they emerge.

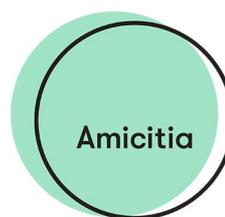
Patrick Mulvihill and Heather Griffin – SDG Advocates 2018



Amicitia is a hybrid social enterprise based in Athenry, Co. Galway. Along with our trading partners, Independent Living Ireland, we provide technology and social supports for elderly and disabled individuals guided by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and critical design practices.

Our technologies include devices to detect falls, epilepsy and wandering, helping to keep people safe and secure in their homes for longer. These technologies support over 1500 individuals in hospitals, nursing homes, and community care environments.

These devices connect with community care organisations who meet in our social hub to co-ordinate their services. In this hub we also provide space for the community to participate in events and activities such as theatre classes, pottery workshops and small-scale plastic recycling. Fifteen different organisations make use of the hub throughout the year including disability organisations, elderly support networks, community development and creative groups.



We took part in the SDG Advocate project in 2018 to gain a better understanding of the SDG's and embed them in our social enterprise. The training and support from Development Perspectives helped us to appreciate the interconnectedness of the goals and the need to work in partnership to scale our social impact. Since then the project has won numerous awards including a Small Business Innovation and Research challenge funded by Enterprise Ireland and Cork County Council. We have also been commissioned by Science Gallery Dublin as part of the national tour of their PLASTIC exhibition.

AMICITIA HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE CLG

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Amy McAuley – SDG Advocate 2017



I took part in the SDG Advocate Programme in 2017. As a result of the programme, I linked in with the Irish Girl Guides to ensure the SDGs were at the forefront of all their programmes. Since then, I have given workshops to over 1000 girls and young women at our international camp in 2018, and plan to do the same at our next international camp in 2021.

These workshops focused on SDGs5 and 10, aimed at promoting gender equality and reducing inequalities. We played the 'walk in my shoes' game, debated how women are portrayed in the media and how the girls could be advocates in their local communities for gender equality. We recorded radio vox pops which were aired on national radio and shared among all Guiding events in 2018. At the international camp, we reached girls from England, America, New Zealand, Kenya, Nigeria, Canada, the Philippines and South Africa.

From this work, I was appointed to the Membership, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee, and focused on implementing the SDGs into our programmes for all ages. We have since then developed three badges, one focused on the SDGs in general, another on Climate Action (SDG13) and another on Partnership for the Goals (SDG17). These are some of the best-selling badges in the shop and I partnered with Trócaire to fund our Climate Action badge. We aim to continue to focus on an SDG a year and develop badges for the Guides. I also have analysed the programmes for girls aged between 4 and 18 years old to ensure there is at least some focus on the SDGs, and which badges tie into the SDGs. The leader handbooks are currently being rewritten with my submissions.

I applied for the Clinton Global Initiative University ran by Bill Clinton and got accepted into their 2019/20 cohort. I am currently working with a mentor to develop an educational toolkit for schools and community organisations to educate other girls and young women about the SDGs. Eventually, I hope to produce a bilingual version of this toolkit.



Maria Connolly – SDG Advocate 2018



During my early teenage years and early 20s I had very bad eating habits which consisted mostly of takeaway food. I considered no connection between my overall health and eating like this. I also didn't link my ridiculous diet to experiencing constant brain fog, hyperactivity and the attention span of a goldfish in class or anything else I had to concentrate on. When I tried to study I just fell asleep and always felt sleepy in class.

My interest in nutrition and natural healing started in my early 20s when a friend I respected, brought my attention to some harrowing facts about public health and the power of healing through nutrition. She had transformed her own health simply by cutting out sugar and grains. I couldn't believe the results and was disgusted by the nonsensical and misleading government dietary and health recommendations.

Personally, at this stage, I had enough of feeling wiped out or feeling like I had a hangover most days even though I hadn't been drinking. From then on, I have had a fiery passion for learning about health and wellness and this eventually led me to a newfound health/nutrition budding career and education.

I qualified as a Nutrition and Lifestyle Coach and studied to become a Nutritional Therapist. I want to help people break through their health difficulties just like I am doing for myself. I want to be part of change. I want to educate, to coach and empower people to reach their full potential in a holistic way.

My action project from partaking in the Advocate Programme was to organise the first ever Skerries Wellness Festival in October 2018. I wanted to raise awareness and have people more engaged and aware, and have a more connected community. For me a healthier society is a more productive and happier society (SDG3).

The aim of the festival was to empower families and individuals to live a healthier, happier and more sustainable lifestyle. The Festival was a fun-filled family day with free meditation and yoga classes, a Health Olympics challenge, a Park HIIT Pop Up, Nutrition and Wellness Interactive talks, delicious healthy food, demonstrations on fermentation, homemade non-toxic deodorant and tips on how to compost waste and recycle. We also had children's entertainment and music and all the activities were free. I reached out to various people to ask them to talk at the event, especially those locally involved in health and wellness businesses. I wanted to promote them on the day, so I had a stand with everyone's contact details and brochures and they could chat to people about the different services they offer." This was the first time that I had organised an event like this and while it was a challenge it was also hugely enjoyable. But I could not have done it without the support from people with experience of putting on events within the community and resources from local shops. It went very well and I am working towards making it an annual event, to expand it and maybe create an interest group out of it.



The work I'm currently doing in County Longford developed as a result of my involvement with Development Perspectives and the SDG Advocate Program. I began with a project in which I had the privilege of working with residents of Longford Direct Provision Centre. As some of the guys living there already had an interest and skills in art, I focused on the use of creativity and storytelling to teach about the goals. To showcase the work of the group we held a community event and art exhibition in the local library entitled *Transforming Our Community: Transforming Our World*. While the focus of the evening was on the artwork of the Global Goals project participants, it was also an opportunity to hear from other groups about work already been done in our community which linked to the Global Goals and the potential for collaboration going forward.

★ Longford ICA

Following on from this I delivered a three-part training and awareness program on the Global Goals to the ladies of Longford ICA and in 2018, for International Women's Day, I facilitated a Women's Vision Boarding Session which focused on themes relating to the Global Goals; Gender Equality, Good Health and Wellbeing, Climate Action, Life on Land and Life Under Water.



★ Longford PPN Global Goals Program

In 2018 I was delighted to be elected as a community and voluntary representative to the board of management of Longford PPN which led to the launch of our PPN 'Global Goals Community Education and Engagement Program'. The program is very much modelled on that of DP's national workshop calendar in that we currently deliver one workshop a month to the community. As a consultant I tailor the workshops to the groups depending on what they would like to achieve, whether that is general information and awareness on the global goals or ideas for an event or project.

★ Transition - Wellbeing & Sustainable Living Weekend

The launch of our PPN Global Goals program, by our PPN Development Officer Síobhan Cronogue, took place in September 2019 at an event I established and coordinated called *Transition Longford – Wellbeing & Sustainable Living Weekend*. The focus of the event was *Transitioning to a more ethical, regenerative and restorative way of living in the world,*

Mental Health and Wellbeing and Sustainability. It was supported by Longford PPN, Longford Chamber of Commerce and Longford LEO.

The 'Community Voices Corner' plays an integral role in the overall weekend activities providing a platform for local people and community groups working on the Global Goals to talk about their ideas, work or projects and share their learning from the PPN workshops. This element of the weekend was inspired by DPs showcase event. We just deliver it on a smaller, more local level. The 2020 Weekend event is due to take place on 19th & 20th September. Incorporating the Global Goals into the event is of course a priority and we hope to do so in more creative ways this year. I look forward to continued involvement of DP in our event.

★ **Transition Longford**

I'm hopeful that the vision of the *Transition Towns Movement* will engage local people's hearts and minds in the same way it does mine as it offers an opportunity to feel part of an international movement of people desiring a better way of living in the world. It's a great vision, and one which offers the possibility of transformative change for our communities.

★ **Climate Action & Planning SPC**

This year I was elected as a PPN Rep onto the Climate Action and Planning SPC within Longford County Council. It's an excellent opportunity to represent my community and to put forward policy proposals on their behalf, relating to climate action, the environment, animal rights and other issues that I and they are concerned and passionate about. My main proposals support the goal of establishing a network of Wellbeing & Sustainability Hubs around the county, the first of which would be in Longford town. My project and policy proposals are supported by Longford PPN so I'm excited to see how this work will develop.

★ **Longford Leader Newspaper Column**

In January 2020 I began writing a monthly column for our local newspaper The Longford Leader. I was delighted they accepted my offer to write this column as it's a perfect platform to circulate information on Transition Longford, our PPN Global Goals Program, the work of the groups who participate in the program and all things related to ethical living, wellbeing and sustainability.

★ **Anna D Atkinson – Coaching. Consultancy. Creativity at www.thecreators garden.ie**

I recently launched my own business as a coach, consultant and group facilitator. My time spent on the SDG Advocacy program helped bring me additional clarity around the purpose of my business. It enriched me both personally and professionally and helped me focus on how best to use my skills to make a difference in the world. I met some amazing people, was inspired in many different ways and can now boast an international network of inspiring change makers who are all playing a part in transforming the world around us.

I feel grateful to Development Perspectives and everyone who makes the SDG Advocacy possible, but a little extra gratitude for the wonderful Stephanie Kirwan, the creator and coordinator of the program.



Emerging from my participation as an SDG Advocate in 2019, I developed and delivered a participatory workshop called 'Zero-Sum Game'. This is a conscious Social Engaged Art Practice movement that targets the root causes of over-consumption (SDG12). The purpose of the 'game' is to contribute in ending excessive societal overconsumption in Ireland and to develop individuals' understanding of societal over-consumption. This is done in a participatory setting, in order to provide confidence, support, and practical experience necessary to become an ethical consumer. I have delivered a number of participatory workshops to date.

My motivation is to create a pedagogy that highlights how overconsumption is harmful towards our natural resources, so that participating individuals can successfully become mobilised ethical consumers that take conscious action against destructive practices and policies (reduce, reuse and recycle). I want to aspire to inspire about the importance of preserving Ireland's and the world's natural resources. I am doing this via a Social Engaged Art Practice and transformative educational participatory movement (SDG4), which encourages the individual to live a more planet-conscious life and to target the demographic of Ireland's wealthiest in an attempt to coax their over-consuming life patterns via art intervention techniques

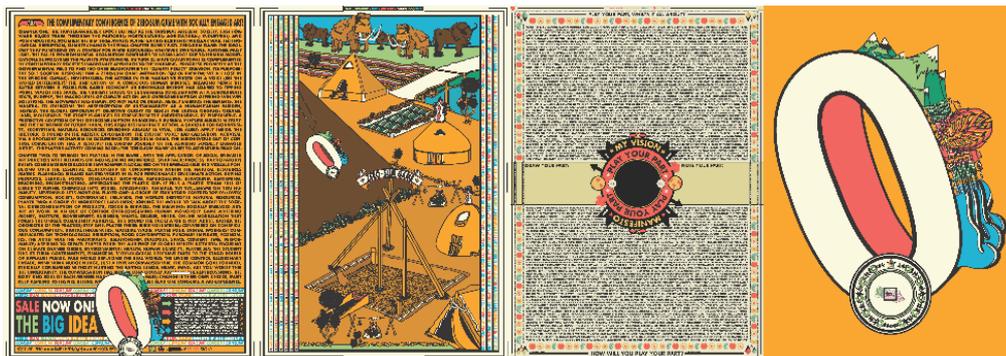
The workshop is a blend between creative and directed participation - informal circle formation highlighted ownership over the content itself. There are 3 phases to the delivery-

Phase 1: Build awareness about overconsumption in Ireland (screener survey)

Phase 2: Participatory workshops that primarily involves employed and unemployed people - Zero-Sum Game Podcast x 6/8 Workshops,

Phase 3: Zero-Sum Game wall art experience/podcast x Coming Soon (future)

Through the Advocate programme, I gained access to research into issues of concern to me as well as developing a network of people with similar motivations to address a range of issues of concern to them. Valuing this as my passion project and beginning its journey by execution in Irish society is one metric to success.



Birds in Business

A community that brings together fierce female entrepreneurs in Ireland



This community group is an online support group created by a couple of young, female entrepreneurs. They use social media to create discussion, provide a platform to ask for advice and support, share and create connections for women who work for themselves. As sole traders or small businesses, they found navigating not just the practical but the mental and emotional challenges of being a woman in business, while juggling family and other commitments, was daunting. They all work in different fields but their experiences are universal with regard to working independently.

It is in its infant stages, the online platform is for regular communication and motivation, while the plan is to also provide regular events every six weeks to come together. My involvement is in providing workshops at these events with focus on SDGs.

SDG 3 Good Health & Well-Being

- ★ A Movement & Mindfulness meet up for members, including a yoga-based movement class followed by a workshop on “Our Essential Energies – how to manage our energy levels and bring balance into our daily lives”.

The SDGs & Your Life & Your Business

- ★ A workshop about the SDGs, what are your key focuses for your community, how can you become an active citizen and build that into your brand/business.

SDG 5 Gender Equality & SDG 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth

- ★ A workshop to discuss and tackle the issues faced by young women in business.

SDG 17 Partnerships

- ★ A workshop to help create community and connections for young women in business, sharing resources and space.

The Personal to the Political



This is my journey from becoming involved with DP on a personal level, some of the work we engage in at SWWFRC (South West Wexford Family Resource Centre) to meet the SDG's and what I am engaging in or hope to engage in on a wider policy level to affect change .

THE PERSONAL

At home we have made changes in many small ways environmentally with fixing leaking tap; changing all lightbulbs to energy efficiency alternatives; reducing thermostat, wearing extra layers, becoming more efficient at food waste and recycling efforts etc. I am also still eating vegetarian and my husband supports me with all meals at home being vegetarian too, so he is on his own journey there. I also act as advocate for supporting resilience in YP with my teenage nephew.

THE WORKPLACE

AT SWWFRC our work to date related to the SDGs has included:

- Development of an environmental noticeboard at The Ramsgrange Centre supporting the SDG work of the local PPN.
- Including sustainable community (SDG6, 7, 11, 12, 13) and health and Wellbeing (SDG3) as objectives/actions within the organisation as part of our next 5-year strategic plan.
- Launch of a September "Sustainable Communities Day" - a Facebook awareness strategy built around the environment and energy saving issues.
- Completion of our Suicide Code and Practice document with a full days training for staff on implementation. Suicide Prevention actions leading from this also included a second round of Community Safe Talks and the SWWFRC Board recently approved our organisational mental health policy with a focus on health and wellbeing actions – including positivity events, better workplace environment actions, wellbeing awareness building/teambuilding activities etc.
- Engaging with a local conservationist volunteer to review the overall use of our old building and to conduct a feasibility study on its future using the SEAI (Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland) grant. https://www.seai.ie/publications/Energy_Efficiency_in_Traditional_Buildings.pdf

THE POLITICAL

On a wider policy level, SWWFRC are working with national organisations to promote the work of the SDGs.

- ★ We worked with The Wheel to promote a Spark Change event locally and now are working on the strategic plan with The Wheel "Living Better Using Less: a Sustainable

Communities toolkit for community and voluntary organisations" to look at how our community organisations can plan other actions to make a difference - https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/2a834d_4fc15728cabc47d584a621c1a4939772.pdf

- ★ We have been approved a grant towards using One World Week in December to work with young people at our Fusion Cafe on the theme of Climate Action and the SDCs. <https://www.oneworldweek.ie/programmes/projects-initiatives/one-world-week/>
- ★ We have made application to Wexford council's CEAF(Community Environment Action Fund) for numerous actions including:
 - Extending a wildlife garden in our Childcare area.
 - Support 3 Rural Public information talks on the use of energy and plastic in our homes.
 - Provision of rainwater harvesting system for use in the local community centre and outdoor childcare recreational garden and the introduction of Water butts to support sustainable water use.
- ★ SWWFRC will host the Wexford county council worker to promote SDG14 under the Blue Flag farming and communities' scheme.
- ★ We have registered as an organisation with <https://www.carbonfootprint.com/> to help us become more aware. We want to reduce carbon emissions, our energy costs, measure our current footprint and get tips on how to keep compliant and have better carbon/energy management.
- ★ On a wider policy level, as a rural Family Resource centre, we assessed the 5-year *Strategy for Sustainable Inclusive and Empowered Communities* to determine if there are any more supports we can avail of for this work. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d8fa3a-sustainable-inclusive-and-empowered-communities-a-five-year-strategy/>
- ★ For 2020 we have already completed some work on enhancing the environment of our rural centre with the addition of a plot to develop and sustain local biodiversity for birds and butterflies, bug hotel, bird feeders from a workshop for children we hosted with a national school. We are currently developing 3 vegetable beds to use making insect hotels with national school children again accompanied by a talk on biodiversity.



- ★ We had a workshop with The Voice Ireland recently and The Seal Sanctuary and have worked on domestic violence issues (SDG5). In an art workshop we organised, participant's took part in a discussion involving the SDGs, exploring their relationships with health and well-being and the four seasons of the year and how they are interlinked.



Since completing the Advocate Programme, I have introduced the SDGs to my organisation Macra Na Feirme in a meaningful way. I have given an introductory workshop to all staff in my organisation. We came up with several ways that we are already working towards the SDGs and what we may be able to do in the future to reach further targets. I plan to do further workshops with our members through the Rural Youth committee, The Agricultural Affairs committee and in our leadership training. Two members of the current Rural Youth committee have applied to take part in the 2020 SDG Advocate Programme and there is now a desire at management level to become an SDG Champion.

I am continuing to look for a further opportunity to use my experience from the programme specifically focusing on SDG3 Good Health and Wellbeing. My vision is to create a space for people to demonstrate they can empower themselves through nutrition, exercise and mindset. I have started my PhD this year so that took over my priorities and I have not gained ground in implementing this project. I still hope to organise a wellness day or evening when the current restrictions are lifted. I plan to have speakers on nutrition and diet, the importance of exercise, and how to mind and promote good mental health. A motivational speaker will also be important at the event, someone who has overcome or is living with a challenge and using diet, exercise and mindset to thrive and achieve their goals. Finding the right person for this has to date been the challenge in getting this plan into action.

As evidenced from SDG Advocate Programme evaluations, Advocates highlight that having completed the programme they are motivated and impassioned to develop action projects. But Action Projects may not immediately emerge or advocates may have an idea in mind but due to time and resources, not realised. The following are a few examples that we will continue to update you on as they are implemented.

Michelle Jackson – SDG Advocate 2018



I have been involved in a number of projects and initiatives since completing the programme in 2018. For example, the women's 20x20 sports campaign, the running club committee in my place of work, taking part in a 'human library experience' with Comhlámh for whom I wrote a piece for their blog on this event and my volunteering experiences in both Uganda in 2017 and in Vietnam with Development Perspectives in 2018. I had initially contacted organisations during the summer of 2018 regarding the right to work issue for asylum seekers and different campaigns, but I did not implement my own action project in this area.

In November 2018, I got in touch with the Green Party and other TD's in my area. I was hoping to start an action group locally to campaign for public water foundations in Dublin. I researched into how I could kick start the initiative, but I feel like I came to a standstill with this idea but this is still an area I am very interested in.

I am currently researching an SDG race/fun run which looks at SDG3 'good health and well-being' while hopefully also raising awareness about all the SDGs. I hope to complete this action project this year alongside being an SDG advocate leader.

The action component is the most important part of the programme and I look forward to getting my project 'up and running' very soon.

Michaeline Donnelly - SDG Advocate 2019



[Girl Does Good](#) is a leadership programme for girls and young women. It aims to empower young women to take an active role in their communities, and to become involved in creating social change, through raising awareness, developing resources and offering mentorship and training opportunities.

For several years now, and especially since taking part in Development Perspectives' SDG Advocate programme and the Next Chapter Programme for women, I have developed a strong interest in Gender Equality. Like others, I am continually inspired by young women like Malala Yousafzai, Greta Thunberg, Alexandria Ocasia Cortez and Sinéad Burke, and by the young women that I have had the chance to work with every day.

I had started [Girl Does Good](#) in October 2019 with a group of young women and I'm hoping to apply to the EIL Seed Fund in the future, and get things back on track!



Bebi Licky and Deirdre Casey – SDG Advocates 2018

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has” - Margaret Mead



Our Action Project will focus on Reduced Inequalities (SDG10). Our focus within this SDG is to making interpretation services available and accessible to migrants who need these services within Dublin. As part of implementing the service, we want to engage a volunteer researcher to assess the current situation and identify barriers and gaps in services particularly in DEASP, HSE, Local Authorities etc.

From this research we would seek funding to produce and launch a report. Following on from this our plan would be to publicise findings and recommendations and lobby relevant stakeholders to implement suggested actions.

With this action project, we aim to promote social inclusion, reduce Inequalities and strengthen the voice of Migrants. We would aim to work in collaboration with other groups and organisations involved in this work e.g. Migrant Service Users, Government Services and NGOs in Dublin.

Lisa O'Rourke – SDG Advocate 2018



I am very interested in responsible consumerism (SDG12) and life on land (SDG15). Presently, I am developing ideas to support people to realise their impact on responsible consumerism every day, how easy it is to reduce and how little 'stuff' we need. I would hope that this would lead to a realisation that big corporations who push products on us are to be held responsible. I am still developing a way of bringing this to a public.

My main idea would be to construct a 'consumption box' such as a telephone booth/small room that people can step inside and that suddenly the room could fill with, for example, the amount of cigarette butts, plastic toothbrushes, chewing gum, ear buds, coffee cups etc consumed over a lifetime. I think this would really bring home the message that as individuals we are responsible for our own consumption. I would hope to develop a further exhibition idea on how corporations also need to change.

I contacted Galway 2020 festival organisers, as the city of culture, hoping for a platform or to participate in exhibitions there, but I did not get much feedback on this. I am still very interested in developing this idea, I just need to find a way to make it an actual concrete thing and identify a place to exhibit it.